FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 2001

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ENERGY STAR® LAUNCHES NEW ENERGY-EFFICIENT TRAFFIC SIGNALS

While state and local governments grapple with power shortages and rising energy costs, one government program is offering a solution. ENERGY STAR, established by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the US Department of Energy (DOE), has recently announced its new specification for energy-efficient traffic signals (available on the Internet at www.energystar.gov). ENERGY STAR labeled traffic signals incorporate light emitting diode (LED) technology, which uses electrical energy very efficiently and therefore emits large amounts of light from small inputs of power. GELcore, LLC and Leotek are the first two manufacturers to adopt the ENERGY STAR specification for their LED traffic signal products. ENERGY STAR labeled traffic signals offer a significant opportunity to reduce energy consumption and utility bills.

Operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week, traffic signals that use high-wattage incandescent bulbs create a sizeable power bill for state and local governments. For a medium-sized city like Anaheim with a population of about 300,000, the power bill from traffic signals alone can exceed $400,000 a year. Larger cities like New York and Los Angeles have annual power bills from traffic signals that can exceed $10 million. According to power companies, recent increases in power rates in some states could double these costs.

Built with highly efficient semiconductor devices, LED traffic signals use about 6 to 25 watts under nominal operating conditions (77^{o}F or 25°C), depending on the shape and type of signal, while incandescent bulbs use about 70 to 150 watts. As a result, LED modules can save more than 90 percent in energy bills for traffic signals. Through the use of ENERGY STAR qualified traffic signals, cities could save 1 million kWh of energy and nearly 70,000 dollars a year for every 100 signalized intersections replaced, saving money and improving the environment at the same time. LED traffic signals have lower maintenance costs because they can last more than seven years, while incandescent bulbs may last only one year. Because LED traffic signals rarely fail prematurely, they also reduce the risk of accidents at intersections and associated liability costs for government agencies. So even with a higher initial investment, dollar-savings and quality-improvement benefits significantly outweigh costs.

The ENERGY STAR label helps consumers identify products that save money and help protect the environment. The label is already displayed on more than 30 product categories, including residential heating and cooling equipment, major appliances, office equipment, lighting, and consumer electronics. Recent additions to the ENERGY STAR family include dehumidifiers, water coolers and set-top boxes. By

signing voluntary agreements with EPA, manufacturers and retailers may place the ENERGY STAR label on products that meet or exceed energy-efficiency guidelines set by EPA and DOE. More than 1,200 manufacturers have signed voluntary agreements to produce and market energy-efficient equipment, and the list is growing. Only traffic signals that comply with ITE standards and operate at low wattage levels under normal conditions can qualify to receive the ENERGY STAR label. For more information on ENERGY STAR labeled traffic signals, visit the ENERGY STAR Web site at www.energystar.gov.